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E.D. 12065: GDS 2/5/88 (ENDERS, THOMAS S.)

TAGS: PEPR, SNAR, CU, CD, US

SUBJECT: (C) CUBAN REACTION TO ACCUSATION OF INVOLVEMENT
IN DRUG TRAFFICKING.

REF: (A) HAVANA 574; (B) STATE 21909

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. IN ADDITION TO STATEMENTS MADE TO USINT CHIEF
BY PADRON, DEPARTMENT HAS NOTED TEXT OF CUBAN
FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT REJECTING STATE DEPARTMENT
ACCUSATIONS. ALTHOUGH CUBAN INVOLVEMENT WITH NARCOTICS
TRAFFICKER SURPRISED WASHINGTON CUBAN ANALYTICAL
COMMUNITY, IT APPEARS TO BE TRUE AND CORROBORATED

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State Dept. review completed

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BY A NUMBER OF SOURCES, SOME CLOSE TO GUILLOT. DEPARTMENT HAS PREPARED THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE (WHICH HAS BEEN USED WITH THE PRESS) TO COMMENT ON THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT'S DENIAL.

BEGIN QUOTE:

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT'S DENIAL THAT IT WAS INVOLVED WITH COLOMBIA DRUG SMUGGLER GUILLOT?

A: OUR INFORMATION IMPLICATING THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT IN MR. GUILLOT'S ARMS-NARCOTICS OPERATION IS DETAILED AND RELIABLE. MR. GUILLOT HIMSELF HAS CONFESSED TO WORKING WITH THE CUBANS.

Q: THE CUBAN STATEMENT THREATENED THAT UNLESS THE US RETRACTS ITS STATEMENT, CUBA WOULD BE "FORCED" TO TERMINATE NARCOTICS COOPERATION WITH THE US. IS THIS LIKELY?

A: I CANNOT SPECULATE ON CUBAN ACTIONS.

Q: DO THE US AND CUBA COOPERATE ON COMBATTING DRUG TRAFFICKING?

A: THE COOPERATION CONSISTS OF OUR SHARING INFORMATION ON DRUG RUNNING VESSELS WITH CUBA. THE CUBANS HAVE SEIZED VESSELS CARRYING NARCOTICS WITHIN CUBA'S CLAIMED WATERS AND TRIED PERSONS FOUND ABOARD. SOMETIMES THESE ACTIONS ARE BASED ON OUR INFORMATION, BUT MORE FREQUENTLY, NOT.

A: WILL COLOMBIA SEEK TO EXTRADITE MR. GUILLOT FROM MEXICO?

A: I CANNOT ANSWER FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA.

Q: THIS WEEK CUBA RELEASED 4 AMERICANS CONVICTED OF DRUG SMUGGLING. HOW MIGHT THE GUILLOT INCIDENT AFFECT POSSIBLE FUTURE RELEASES?

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A: I CANNOT SPECULATE ON WHAT ACTIONS THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE.

END OF QUOTE.

3. ON JAN 27 CCA DIRECTOR SPOKE TO CUBINT CHIEF ABOUT STATE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT AND SAID THAT THE USS HAD BEEN SURPRISED BY THE INFORMATION BECAUSE IT HAD ALWAYS ASSUMED THAT THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT WAS TOO PURITANICAL TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH DRUG TRAFFICKING. NEVERTHELESS, USG KNEW IT TO BE TRUE AND DEPARTMENT STOOD BY ITS STATEMENT. CUBINT CHIEF THEN COMPLAINED THAT USG WAS ACCUSING RAUL CASTRO. CCA DIRECTOR REPLIED THAT NOWHERE IN STATE DEPARTMENT RELEASE IS RAUL CASTRO OR ANY OTHER CUBAN OFFICIAL IDENTIFIED AS INVOLVED WITH GUILLOT. CUBAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT EQUATE WHAT APPEARS IN A MIAMI HERALD STORY WITH OFFICIAL POSITION OF USG. ON JAN 28, CUBINT CHIEF GAVE CCA DIRECTOR MINREX DENIAL OF STATE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT. FORMER EXPLAINED THAT THE DENIAL HAD NOT BEEN CIRCULATED WITHIN CUBA BUT HAD BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO PRENSA LATINA AND TO THE FOREIGN PRESS IN CUBA. HAS THE MINREX DENIAL BEEN CARRIED IN GRANMA AND IN THE CUBAN MEDIA? IF NOT, CAN USINT COMMENT ON TREATMENT GIVEN THIS STORY DOMESTICALLY IN CUBA?

4. WE NOTE THAT PADRON ALSO RAISED RAUL CASTRO. USINT CHIEF SHOULD SEEK AN APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND PADRON THAT STATE DEPARTMENT IN ITS STATEMENT (REF B) DID NOT MENTION RAUL CASTRO. FURTHER, WITH RESPECT TO COOPERATION ON DRUG TRAFFIC INTERDICTION, USINT CHIEF KNOWS THAT PRESENT COOPERATION (EXPLAINED IN PRESS GUIDANCE) IS AS FAR AS CUBA WAS WILLING TO GO IN TWO ROUNDS OF CONVERSATIONS HELD WITH THE COAST GUARD IN 1978 AND 1979.

HAIG

END OF MESSAGE

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